DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 175 148 EA 012 058

AUTHOR McCarthy, Martha M.; Kuh, George D.
TITLE A Profile of Doctoral Students in Educational Administration.
INSTITUTION University Council for Educational Administration, Columbus, Ohio.
PUB DATE 79
NOTE 5p.
JOURNAL CIT UCEA Review: v20 n3 p27-30 Sum 1979

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Doctoral Programs; *Educational Administration; Females; *Graduate Students; Higher Education; *Program Evaluation; *Student Characteristics

ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes the findings of a national survey of educational administration doctoral students. The purpose of the study was (1) to compile demographic data on currently enrolled students and (2) to determine students' research orientation in relation to selected demographic variables. The study was based on the assumption that information about students is necessary to determine whether graduate programs are providing a personally challenging and a professionally useful educational experience. Questionnaires were sent to 1,899 students at 62 colleges and universities. Results indicated it is imperative that preparation programs in educational administration provide opportunities for students to become involved in inquiry activities in addition to required research-related courses. Faculty should inform students about saturated job areas and begin to redesign curricula for emerging areas like research and evaluation and long-range planning. In addition, the paper notes, faculty should remain responsive to changes in the characteristics of students, especially the increase in female doctoral candidates. (Author/LD)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED175148



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HA EEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

# A Profile of Doctoral Students in Educational Administration

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

UCEA

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

by

*Martha M. McCarthy* *George D. Kuh*

*School of Education*
*Indiana University*

This paper summarizes the findings of a national survey of educational administration doctoral students. The purpose of the study was twofold: (1) to compile demographic data on currently enrolled students and (2) to determine students' research orientation in relation to selected demographic variables. The study was based on the assumption that information about students is necessary to determine whether graduate programs are providing a personally challenging and a professionally useful educational experience. These findings should assist departments of educational administration in recruiting, understanding, and preparing potential colleagues and in anticipating the future needs and directions of the profession.

EA 012 058

**Method**

All UCEA member institutions (n=47) and 25 non-UCEA institutions randomly selected from the remaining 88 non-UCEA affiliated doctoral programs in educational administration were invited to participate in the study. Ten institutions declined the invitation, resulting in an institutional sample of 62. The student sample included 1899 students (70% males). Usable questionnaires were returned by 1160 respondents for a response rate of 61% (62% males, 59% females).

The instrument used in this study, the Educational Administration Doctoral Student Survey (EADSS), requested demographic information about respondents, including their educational and professional experiences. In addition, the 48-item *Professionalism and Research Orientation of Students Inventory [PROSI]*[1] was modified for use with educational administration students to obtain research orientation (RO) scores. The mean, variance, and range of demographic and attitude items were computed for respondents. Research orientation scores were also computed for respondents and each institution. Appropriate statistical analyses were performed to examine relationships among variables.

**Findings**

Respondents ranged in age from 22 to 64, with one-third between the ages of 31 and 35. Women were overrepresented in both the younger (33% under 30) and older (38% over 44) age categories. Of the total respondents, 29% were women. Over three quarters of the respondents were married, but women were less likely to be married and more likely to be single or divorced than were men.

### Educational Experience, Professional Background, and Aspirations

The most frequently reported undergraduate majors were secondary education (33%), science and elementary education (13% each), and other education related majors (12%). A disproportionate number of women reported majors in elementary education. Of the respondents with masters degrees over three quarters were in some area of education.

Almost one-fourth of the respondents reported that they would not be required to spend any portion of time in "full-time" study during their doctoral program, while the remaining three-fourths reported residency requirements ranging from six months to two years. Less than 30% indicated that their program required an internship, and more women (37%) than men (25%) were enrolled in such programs. Less than a quarter of the respondent group held a graduate assistantship of any kind. Forty-six percent of the respondents reported reading one or two professional journals regularly, 49% three or four, and 5% five or more. The journals most likely to be read by educational administration students were *Phi Delta Kappan* and the *NASSP Bulletin*.

Eighty five percent of the respondents had teaching experience (38% had 3 to 6 years), with women having taught more years than men. Sixty percent had no experience as a building administrator and over three-fourths reported no central office experience. Less than 10% had experience in research and evaluation units or in state departments of education. One-third of the respondents, however, reported experience in other education-related jobs such as college administration, counseling, and administration of federal programs.

Central office administration (34%), college and university teaching (20%), and building administration (15%) accounted for over two-thirds of the respondents' first choices for employment immediately upon completion of the doctorate. More men preferred central office positions while more women desired college teaching, research/evaluation, or "other" education-related positions. When respondents' first three choices were combined, 63% aspired to central office administration, 61% to college teaching, 38% to building administration, and 25% to research and evaluation work. For the most part, students' aspirations were consistent with their previous experience (i.e., persons who had been building administrators were more likely to seek building administration positions than those without similar experience, and persons who had had central office experience were more likely to continue in or to seek similar positions).[2]

### Research Orientation

Individual Research Orientation (RO) scale scores ranged from 33 to 112, while composite institutional RO scores ranged from 74 to 92 ($x=85.6$, $sd=10.7$). A number of variables were positively related to RO. Respondents who had completed all doctoral coursework, had written a paper requiring statistical analysis, or had conducted original research other than their dissertation had higher RO scores than their counterparts. Women had higher RO scores than men. Also, RO scores were positively related to the number of journals read; i.e., the more professional journals read, the higher the RO score. Readers of the following journals had higher RO scores than non-readers: *Journal of Educational Research, Educational Administration Quarterly, Administrative Science Quarterly, Education Leadership,* and *Phi Delta Kappan*.

Although the number of research-related courses completed or required was not found to be related to research orientation, respondents who were graduate assistants had higher RO scores than those not holding assistantships. When the types of assistantships were compared, respondents holding research positions tended to have stronger orientations to research than those who had teaching or other kinds of appointments, although the difference was not statistically significant.

Research orientation was also related to various career patterns and postdoctoral aspirations of respondents. For males, RO scores decreased as years of building administration, college teaching or state department of education experience increased. For women, teaching experience was negatively related to RO. In comparing respondents' RO scores with their respective first choice of postdoctoral professional position, those who desired public school teaching and central office administration tended to have lower RO scores than those aspiring to other positions, while respondents interested in research and evaluation, college/university teaching, and state department of education positions tended to have higher RO scores.[3]

Respondents also indicated their opinions about various aspects of their doctoral preparation. Although two-thirds reported that their major field courses were as rigorous in an academic sense as courses from other disciplines, less than a quarter considered educational administration to be among the most respected areas of graduate study. Over half, however, considered their preparation program to be among the best educational administration programs in the country (men were overrepresented). A similar proportion agreed that important and

substantive changes were taking place in the profession and that their doctoral preparation was relevant to problems in the "real" world of education. Only 15% indicated that they would not select educational administration if they were to begin their graduate work again (women were overrepresented).

**Discussion**

The typical educational administration doctoral student is a married male, 37 years of age, has one or two children, has taught for about six years, and has been a guilding administrator for several years. The student probably reads the *Kappan* and possibly the *NASSP Bulletin*. The typical doctoral student's immediate carrer aspiration is to become either a central office administrator or a college professor.

The fact that 61% of the respondents included college/university teaching among their employment preferences was inconsistent with the findings of an earlier study indicating that faculty members perceived a majority of their students to be preparing for administrative roles in public schools.[4] The high proportion of students currently interested in college teaching positions is somewhat alarming given that relatively few vacancies exist in this area. Faculty have a responsibility to identify students actively seeking university teaching positions, prepare them psychologically for a difficult and potentially frustrating search, and assist them in a more realistic interpretation of the job market.

In studies using data collected in 1973-74[5] and 1975,[6] 12% and 23% respectively of the doctoral students surveyed were women. In the current study, 29% were women. Similar increases have been noted in the proportion of doctorates across all fields awarded to women during this period.[7] Although women are still underrepresented in preparation programs, the proportion of females appears to be increasing, particularly among the younger students. This finding is noteworthy when compared with the proportions of women administrators in the field of various times during the past several decades.[8] It appears that the percentage of female doctoral students is increasing, but the percentage of female administrators in public school districts is decreasing. While it has been recently documented that about 65% of the doctoral recipients are placed in positions upon completion of their degrees,[9] it has not been reported whether a disproportionate number of women doctorates have been unable to find positions in the profession commensurate with their training.

Earlier research suggested that the aspirations of male and female doctoral students were similar.[10] The EADSS data indicated that differences do exist now, and can probably be explained in part by the relationship between the type of previous experience each group has had and the current employment situation. Most women do not have as much administrative experience as men. Consequently, women finishing the doctorate may not fare as well as their male counterparts when competing for positions in the shrinking pool of vacancies in building and central office administration. Women, therefore, are probably turning to what have been in the past less popular types of positions (e.g., research/evaluation and "other" education-related work).

The comparison of research orientation scores and demographic variables revealed that students' interest in and appreciation of inquiry increased the more they were exposed to and had experience with research activities. This was perhaps best exemplified by the relatively higher RO scores of respondents reporting previous inquiry activity and research assistantship experience. Given that the number of required inquiry-related courses was not associated with RO, it seems that for favorable research attitudes to be fostered, experiences must be designed in such a way so as to involve the student on a personal level in an inquiry activity. The data reported here also indicated that the research orientation of readers of certain journals was higher than the RO of nonreaders. For the most part, the differences in readers' RO seemed to be consistent with the images projected by the respective journals.

The finding that women respondents had higher RO scores than their male counterparts warrants attention, particularly by those responsible for monitoring the efficacy of preparation programs. Since the proportion of female doctoral students has been increasing steadily during the past decade, it is likely that a greater percentage of future educational administration doctoral students will be interested in inquiry-related activities and will seek postdoctoral positions pertaining to research and evaluation. Accordingly, preparation programs should incorporate appropriate experiences for these students and broaden their training focus to prepare graduates to assume specialized administrative positions (i.e., program evaluators, directors of research and evaluation units, and long-range planners) in addition to traditional line administrative roles (i.e., principals and superintendents).

**Conclusion**

Like any other profession, educational administration must sustain a concentrated research effort in order to insure the profession's vitality and growth during the coming decades. Doctoral level educational administrators are expected to provide leadership in this regard. At the least, they should be expected to stay abreast of new developments in the field and incorporate new knowledge in their

professional environment. Because the requisite attitudes and skills for these behaviors are likely to be acquired during the doctoral experience, it is imperative that educational administration preparation programs provide opportunities for students to become involved in inquiry activities *in addition* to required research-related courses.

Special attention to the supply and demand ratio of educational administrators (congruence between placement data, students' aspirations, and employment opportunities) seems warranted. Should discrepancies exist similar to those suggested by the EADSS data, faculty must inform students about saturated areas and begin to redesign curricula for emerging areas such as research and evaluation and long-range planning. In addition, faculty must remain responsive to the changing characteristics of students. Among the more salient trends is the increase in female doctoral candidates. Training experiences need to be reevaluated to insure that they are appropriate for new clientele and that they address the new configuration of skills required by the profession. □

*Notes*

1. G. D. Kuh, B. A. Lardy, and F. E. Greenlee, "Research Orientation of Graduate Students in College Student Personnel," *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 20 (March 1979): 99-103.
2. For a more indepth discussion of the findings relating to student characteristics, see M. M. McCarthy, G. D. Kuh, and J. M. Beckman, "Characteristics and Attitudes of Doctoral Students in Educational Administration," *Phi Delta Kappan* (in press).
3. For a discussion of implications of the research orientation findings, see G. D. Kuh and M. M. McCarthy, "Research Orientation of Doctoral Students in Educational Administration" (submitted for publication).
4. J. M. Nagle and E. E. Nagle, "Doctoral Programs in Educational Administration," in *Preparatory Programs for Educational Administrators in the United States*, ed. P. Silver and D. Spuck (Columbus, Ohio: University Council for Educational Administration, 1978): 114-133.
5. C. E. Kline and R. E. Munsterman, "Doctoral Student Characteristics: UCEA Student Data System, 1973-1974," *UCEA Review* 16 (January 1975): 21-25; Nagle and Nagle, "Doctoral Programs in Educational Administration."
6. Nagle and Nagle, *Ibid.*
7. National Research Council, *Summary Report 1977 Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 1978).
8. See Croft - NEI, *Educational Leadership: Current Approaches*, Croft Leadership Action Folio 109 (Waterford, Connecticut: Auther, 1975-76); National Council of Administrative Women in Education, *Wanted: More Women in Educational Leadership* (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1975.
9. Nagle and Nagle, "Doctoral Programs in Educational Administration."
10. C. E. Kline and R. E. Munsterman, "UCEA Doctoral Student Experience, Competency and Employment Desire According to Race and Sex," *UCEA Review* 18 (September 1976): 1-10.

This research was supported in part by a grant from the University Council for Educational Administration. The authors wish to acknowledge the assistance of Joan M. Beckman in collecting and analyzing the data.